

P-655 - COST EFFICIENCY OF SEX-OFFENDER TREATMENT PROGRAMS IN SWITZERLAND

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There is robust empirical evidence for the efficacy of offense-oriented treatment programs. These programs help reducing the rate of recidivism. In the case of sex-offender treatment, a lower rate of recidivism results in lower rate of victims. For the victims, experiencing sexual assaults is a relevant risk factor for the development of a series of mental health disorders. It is thus not surprising that sex-offenses lead to substantial financial costs and preventing sexual re-offending help reducing treatment costs.

In Switzerland, a longitudinal study, that started in 2000, allowed to compare the outcome of more than 300 treated violent and sex-offenders with a control group of untreated offenders. Though the risk for re-offending was estimated to be higher in the treatment group, the rate of recidivism was considerably lower. Using this difference of re-offending among the groups, it could be demonstrated that the treatment program was cost-efficient since the costs of the treatment programs were substantially lower than the expected treatment costs for the victims.